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HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION (HFIA)

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TO: CITY COUNCIL CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU
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COUNCILMEMBER ANN H. KOBAYASHI

DATE: WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2012

TIME: 10 A.M.

PLACE: KAPOLEI HALE

1000 ULUOHIA STREET, CONFERENCE ROOMS A, B AND C
KAPOLEI, HAWAII 96707

FROM: Hawaii Food Industry Association, Lauren Zirbel – Executive Director

RE: Bill 10 Relating to the use of bags provided to customers.

Chair Martin, Vice Chair Anderson and Councilmembers:

HFIA opposes this bill as written.

HFIA **supports a fee on all single use bags**, as a means of encouraging consumers to reduce the use of both paper and plastic single use bags.

A fee addresses the fact that paper bags are not more environmentally friendly than plastic bags. Our member stores are on track to spend \$30K more per store annually on bag costs in counties where plastic is banned.

Without a fee on paper, a plastic bag ban bills will result in a shift to paper bags. Paper bags can cost as much as 10 times more than plastic bags. The increased cost of providing paper bags is absorbed by the cost of other items, resulting in **higher prices for the consumer**. There is little upside for the environment.

Stores use bags as branding tools and lose money when they have to manufacture a different bag for each county because of inconsistent rules and regulations.

If we want to encourage reusable bag use, a fee is a good way to do so. A plastic bag ban does not accomplish this goal.

Plastic bag bans do not help the environment because paper bags take more energy to produce and recycle and generate far more pollution than plastic bags.

Compostable and biodegradable bags misappropriate our food sources – such as corn – and cause serious agricultural and water usage issues in other countries.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.